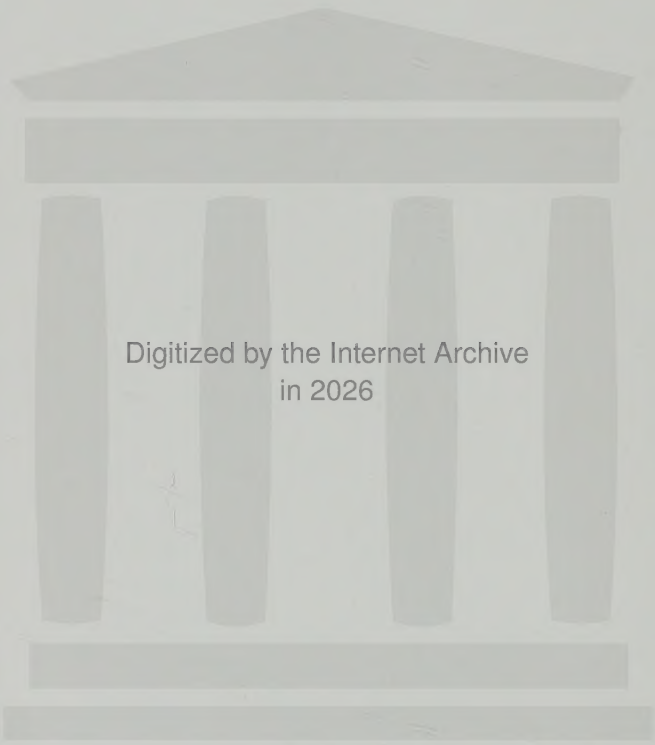
PR6005
.A417
.W3
1971

0284137
PR 6005 .A417 .W3 1971
THE WAY Z GOOSE
CAMPBELL ROY

DATE DUE

GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U.S.A.


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/wayzgoosesouthaf0000camp_q3l7

The Wayzgoose

Dedicated to
MARY CAMPBELL

THE WAYZGOOSE

A South African Satire

by

ROY CAMPBELL

Author of 'The Flaming Terrapin'

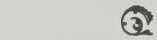
London

JONATHAN CAPE · BEDFORD SQUARE

1928

Republished 1971
Scholarly Press, Inc., 22929 Industrial Drive East
St. Clair Shores, Michigan 48080

FIRST PUBLISHED IN MCMXXVIII
MADE & PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY BUTLER & TANNER LTD
FROME AND
LONDON



Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 72-131660
ISBN 0-403-00547-7

The Wayzgoose

PR6005
.A418
.W3
1971

284137

THE

WAYZGOOSE[1]

I

ATTEND my fable if your ears be clean,
In fair Banana Land we lay our scene –
South Africa, renowned both far and wide
For politics and little else beside:
Where, having torn the land with shot and shell,
Our sturdy pioneers as farmers dwell,
And, 'twixt the hours of strenuous sleep, relax
To shear the fleeces or to fleece the blacks:

REMARK

[1] This phenomenon occurs annually in S.A. It appears to be a vast corroboree of journalists, and to judge from their own reports of it, it combines the functions of a bun-fight, an Eisteddfod and an Olympic contest. The Wayzgoose of this poem, however, is not only attended by those who celebrate the function *annually*, but by all the swarms of would-be poets, novelists, philosophers, etc., in South Africa, who should all be compelled to attend such functons *daily*.

Where every year a fruitful increase bears
Of pumpkins, cattle, sheep, and millionaires –
A clime so prosperous both to men and kine
That which were which a sage could scarce define;[1]
Where fat white sheep upon the mountains bleat
And fatter politicians in the street;
Where lemons hang like yellow moons ashine
And grapes the size of apples load the vine;
Where apples to the weight of pumpkins go
And donkeys to the height of statesmen grow,
Where trouts the size of salmon throng the creeks
And worms the size of magistrates – the beaks;
Where the precocious tadpole, from his bog,
Becomes a journalist ere half a frog;
Where every shrimp his proud career may carve
And only brain and muscle have to starve.
The 'garden colony' they call our land,
And surely for a garden it was planned:
What apter phrase with such a place could cope
Where vegetation has so fine a scope,

REMARK

[1] Example – 'Wanted: a good short-horn typist.' – S.A. Paper.

Where *weeds* in such variety are found
And all the rarest *parasites* abound,
Where pumpkins to professors are promoted
And turnips into Parliament are voted?
Where else do men by vegetating vie
And run to seed so long before they die?
In Eden long ere colonies took root
Knowledge was first delivered from a Fruit,
All Sciences from one poor Tree begin
And have a vegetable origin,
And to this day, as I have often seen,
It is accounted learned to be *green*.
What wonder then if fruits should still be found
Purveying wisdom to the world around.
What wonder if, assuming portly airs,
Beetroots should sit in editorial chairs,
Or any cabbage win the critics' praise
Who wears his own green leaves instead of bays!
What wonder then if, as the ages pass,
Our universities, with domes of glass,
Should to a higher charter prove their claims
And be exalted to tomato-frames,

Whose crystal roofs should hatch with genial ray
A hundred mushroom poets every day;
Where Brussels scientists should hourly sprout
And little shrubs as sages burgeon out;
Where odes from beds of guano should be sprung
And new philosophies from horses' dung?
Wisdom in stones some reverend poet found,
But here it is as common as the ground –
Behold our Vegetable Athens rise
Where all the *acres* in the Land are *wise*!

THE Rising Sunset brightened on the scene
Somewhere around the coast of Karridene –
Seldom do suns such striking talent show
As when they set Natalian woods aglow,
And surely from the stir that this one made
He might have been a student at the Slade –
Save for his lack of frame and awkward size
He might have won the Gundelfinger Prize:[1]

REMARK

[1] The Gundefinger Prize is awarded annually to the most successful 'painter' in Natal.

A hundred guineas would have been his glow
worth
Had it been signed by Goodman or by Roworth.[1]
Around him swam the mists of orange tint -
And little cloudlets of boracic lint,
Beneath him puffed the waves (the tide was full)
As if they had been made of cotton-wool.
Never has dawned since Durban was a city
A sun so realistic or so pretty,
And now through mists that simmered with the
dawn
His hard-boiled face had reddened like a prawn:
Beneath, the wild bananas waved about
And from the woods uprose a joyful shout –
For here, the fauns and dryads of the scene,
Did all the Learned of the Land convene
To solemnize with many a graceful rite
That sacred festival the Wayzgoose hight.
Hither had flocked, with cushions and with tents,
The hoary prophets of To-day's Events;

REMARK

[1] Two local popular painters.

Behind them thronged the squadrons of the
Press,
And many a doughty wight, in times of stress,
Whose typewriter like any maxim-gun
Had crackled deadly insults at 'the Hun':
Two Art Academies arrived in troops
And Durban sent its literary 'groups' –
All who upon the wings of 'uplift' rise
To boost colonial culture to the skies,
All whom their own sarcastic fates pursue
To write for 'Voorslag' or the 'S.A.Q.' –
Statesmen-philosophers with earnest souls,
Whose lofty theories embrace the Poles,
Yet only prove their minds are full of Holes,[1]
And public orators, each one of whom
Had talked both Boer and Briton to their doom,
And slain, the feat of Samson to surpass,
Whole thousands with the jawbone of an ass –
The pale blue Naiads from their streams of ink
With pale blue stockings, such as never shrink,

REMARK

[1] See *Holism and Evolution*, by General J. Smuts.

With pale blue spectacles and pale blue stays,
And pale blue insight into human ways –
Nymphs of the novel, pert and picturesque,
And wooden hamadryads of the desk –
All these came flocking to the scene, and more
Whom to describe would only be a bore;
But this is true – deny it he who dare! –
That all the Lions of the Press were there.
They came grey-trousered, and they came tweed-capped,
And brought their food in their own writings wrapped:
Here Wodson's saws, transparent in the grease,
Wrapped a fat fowl with many a tasteful crease;
Here a whole 'Mercury' with ample sheaf
Served as the trouser to a leg of beef;
And there 'Sundowner's' wit, turned outside in,
Served as the puttee to a turkey's shin –
Alas for 'Idler's' sayings, wise and neat,
Each for some sausage was the winding sheet!
'Words of the Wise' the yellow mustard stained,
'Temperance notes' with beery froth were veined.

'Art Causeries' were littered far and near,
And 'Wesleyan Items' soaked in lager beer.
Rivers of gravy irrigate the sheet
That lately glowed with patriotic heat;
Here mental food with physical was pent
And mayonnaise with criticism blent.
With busy hands, in their own jokes and puns,
Their wives had wrapped the biscuits and the buns;
Blue-bottles, unabashed by Russel's rage,
Here skate in graceful circles o'er his page;
Over his text they skim with motions fleet,
Upon his climaxes they wipe their feet,
And here and there they pause – punctilious flies! –
To punctuate his text and dot his I's.
Under their fairy-gliding feet, in vain
The loud infinitive may split in twain –
They link the missing parts with greasy spoor
And prepositions to the verb restore.
Through mixing metaphors still unperplexed,
Betwixt colliding arguments, unvexed,
They weave their tracks, their hieroglyphs they
score,

And leave it less a muddle than before!
But one poor cockroach halts with doleful mien,
Caught by 'Vermilion's' catchy style between
Two sentences of labyrinthine gyre,
And seems the way of exit to inquire:
Poor beast! in vain your hairy legs you hitch,
In vain your sensitive antennæ twitch –
A vast abyss on either side is gapped:
Like Theseus in the Cretan mazes trapped,
Think you this awful darkness to escape
That never deviates into form or shape?
But stay! a rescuing fly with slender clue
Speeds to his aid like Ariadne true
Unravelling a sinuous trail of germs
Along whose track the wretch to safety squirms.
Here good advice in anchovy is drenched
And patriotic fire in gravy quenched;
Here racialism in a martial ballad,
Spattered with oil, is turned into a salad;
And o'er some sad obituary, here,
The battered orange sheds an amber tear –

Such chaos lay for many acres round
And reams of greasy paper strewed the ground.

STORMS in a teapot often have occurred,
But teapots in a storm are rarely heard;
Yet here, behold, a teapot they produce
Wrapped in a storm of scurrilous abuse
Levelled at Hertzog and at Tielman Roos,[1]
Yet it emerges with as little harm
As Roos or he have reason for alarm:
Unbroken, though by fierce invectives shot,
Uncracked by epithets, the fragile pot
From forth the tempest and the paper fray,
Emerges with as little scathe as they.
What strange paralysis your wit must trammel
That cannot even crack this frail enamel!
Anger is but the powder, style the aim,
But Wit the shot that bags the wary game!
Ah, 'Mercury' and "Tiser,' my dear friends,

REMARK

[1] Minister of Justice for South Africa.

How much, alas, on hateful wit depends –
Wit, the irreverent, wit, the profane,
Wit, whom you shun with heart, and soul, and brain!
Yet without wit your anger has no point,
And when you strive to blister, you anoint;
You flatter to insult, you praise to shame,
And soar to panegyric when you blame.
Yea, without wit, you merely soothe and lull,
Both tamely fierce, and passionately dull!
I once was made the victim of your praise,
Your admiration withered up my bays,
Humbled and cowed I limped about the street,
Nor dared my image in the glass to meet.
Such damp humiliation weighed me down
When 'Tiser' sang my praises through the town,
And I – could anyone be deeper shamed? –
A laureate of the drapers was proclaimed.
But now I pass the Scylla of your praise,
The dread Charybdis of your love I graze –
With flying sails my vessel speeds elate
To reach the peaceful haven of your hate!
Bred on the bland senilities of 'Punch'

How can you serve us save to wrap our lunch?
Think you the soul of Hertzog to perturb
Or Tielman from his rogueries to curb?
Restrain your rage, another method try,
Praise them but once – and both of them will die!
Lo, with your fulminations, drowsing deep,
Bland Tielman lullabies his babes to sleep;
And Taakhaar's children, round the cowdung fire,
Clamour for nightly readings from their sire.
See how his 'vrew' on nights of frost and sleet
Between her blankets folds the crackling sheet –
You serve from frost to guard her grimy toes
By day you play the kerchief to her nose,
Or in the chill of dawn, with acrid fume,
Under her porridge-pot the sticks illume . . .
In vain, against your foes, this rage you spend,
Who only serve them as a Household Friend.
The chemist goes about with drooping lugs
For journalists monopolize the drugs.
What need of aspirin at two and six
When tuppence now will cure your sorest fix?
Read but a line – in drowsy slumber fall,

And wake to-morrow if you wake at all.
While Wodson demonstrates, to all who think,
The anæsthetic properties of ink,
While Russel chloroforms the land, and Hill
Continues strange emetics to distil,
What hope for Doctors – must they also starve
With no more carcasses to hack or carve?
Yet there's one strange disorder of the mind
For which the journalists no cure can find –
Wit, whom no vaccination can restrain,
Contagious wit, is quarantined in vain;
No sleeping draught can over Wit prevail
Which singes hoary critics in the tail.
Against this wild disorder of the brain
The 'Mercury' may fulminate in vain –
It scalds like fire, it pierces every pore,
It bites as hard as Bolitho can bore.
It burns like small-pox, it inflames the eyes,
And wipes out even journalists like flies;
And yet in spite of wit supreme they reign
And with their pens and rulers 'Rule the Main.'
Now water-seekers leave the land to Hill

Whose pen can bore more deeply than they drill,
White-ants and borers, turning boards to dust,
Give up their old professions in disgust,
Uncared for hangs the gimlet on the wall,
The Pen, the Pen is mightier than the awl!
Shut in his shop, the ruined Butcher sighs
And o'er the hopeless prospect rolls his eyes,
For journalists are selling tripe too cheap,
And profiteering on the brains of sheep.
And Hill, at wholesale price, when all is said,
Can sell the contents of a whole calf's head.
Over all trades the journalists exult
And unemployment is the sad result.
You hoary sires, who send your sons to schools,
To learn good English and to keep its rules,
While deep into their wooden skulls, like tin-
tacks,
The masters hammer in the rules of syntax –
What boots this weary labour and expense
Save to pervert them into common sense?
Save time and labour! teach them but to bore,
Cradle their youth in journalistic lore,

Teach them to walk in Dullness' narrow way,
And never from Tautology to stray,
Feed them on Kipling, nourish them on 'Punch' –
And in their works the World will wrap its
lunch!

ALAS, good souls, with what dyspeptic ire
You boast your race and patriotic fire!
Show first that English blood you love to brag
And prove the spirit – if you claim the Flag.
Is yours the giant race in times of yore
That bred a Dryden, or a Marvell bore?
Are you the English, you, that groaning sit
Shot through and riddled by a Dutchman's wit?
Is it so English under Tielman's blows
To whine your impotence in feeble prose,
Your Pegasus a mule, your Muse a trull,
And is it to be English – to be dull?
What are your threats of battles that impend
And what would these avail you in the end?
Rush headlong forth for politics to die,

Go, sacrifice tame mutton for a lie,
Choose bricks and bats, choose anything but Wit,
The sole thing that could help your cause a whit!
Rather with Tielman would I stand in yoke
Than rank with you in impotence and smoke,
For to his ignorance is wit suspended
Like an old Tomcat with its tail appended,
But your own ignorance is purely Manx
And has no stump to tally with its shanks.
(O Tielman, I will love thee evermore,
So thou their nationality restore
And *plague* them into Englishmen once more!)
What's that within your hands – is that the Pen,
Once sharp and once the implement of Men –
Was this, ye gods, the dainty Whistler's foil
When he from Ruskin let a tun of oil
And like a swordfish round a whale astreak
Deep through the yielding blubber shot his beak?
Was this the huge harpoon that Marvell bore
To fish the corpse of Holland to the shore?

Was this the boomerang that Dryden threw
To crumple Flecknoe as I crumple you?
Alas, and has it come to this strange use?
Its stem all rusty and its point obtuse.
In Wodson's hand it scratches like a pin –
So rasps the cricket with his horny shin,
And, wrapped around it like a woollen bib,
Lo! Jubb's soft hand, perspiring, plies the nib.

OVER this rhyme in cafés you will nod,
Seem unconcerned when most you feel the rod,
Affect a yawn, pretend a weary smile,
Deplore the taste, and criticize the style.
Yet when at home and by the world unseen,
On senseless paper you will vent your spleen,
Claw forth with trembling hand my dainty page
And hurl it on the dustbin in your rage –
In vain you'll strive to hide the blows you catch
And only in my absence, dare to scratch.
For there is one in this most sacred place,
English in wit – whatever be my race –

In Durban here – unmentionable brute! –
Who dares the voice of Dullness to refute:
Behold, in naked blasphemy I stalk
And dare to prove I am not made of PORK!
Your small horizon, from Berea to Bluff,
Rings you with peace: you may be grim and gruff,
But out beyond – the World will laugh enough!
My words, O Durban, round the World are blown
Where I, alone, of all your sons am known:
I circle Tellus with an airy robe –
Thou art the smear I leave upon the globe!
Cobham outsoared, I sail on Satire's wings
Satire, who dares to box the ears of kings,
And comes to statesmen as to roguish boys
To snatch from them their baubles and their toys.
In vain you'll strive to minimize my powers
Whose laughter will outlast your tallest towers.
I mock to last: you scold poor rats! to die
Save in my verse where you immortal lie –
Yea, when your grandsons bind my works in calf,

Your own unfeeling progeny will laugh
To see their grandsires pickled in my ink –
And Dullness will to future ages stink!

TRUE poesy admits no curb at all
Though judges bellow, and though lawyers bawl;
Down on the gravest judge, as on a child,
My muse has looked, and as a parent, smiled:
For rhyme above the heads of monarchs sails
And wit outlasts the concrete of the gaols.
Then hear the damned sedition that I sing,
A poet, though in rags, is thrice a king,
Who dares the world without an army face
And kick a mongrel town into its place!
Jostling with emperors, an outlaw gay,
Shouldering paunchy statesmen from his way,
Along the sounding thoroughfares of time
He swaggers in the clashing spurs of rhyme,
And all around him throng, with forms divine,
His gay seraglio of Muses Nine,

Those strapping girls whose love, to say the least,
Would make a rabid Mormon of a priest.

Now do you groan when Tielman flays your backs –
You, who condone the bondage of the blacks?
The Lord, who sent the flies to Egypt's strand,
Now sends a Tielman to Banana Land.
When you at poets hurl your venomed scrolls
And grudge us all the *riches* of our souls,
Why do you turn your envy, let me quiz,
To grudge poor Roos the *poverty* of his?
Alas, poor Tielman, what is he to blame? –
A Locust at the word of God he came,
With huge moustaches, like antennæ curled
And paper wings to swoop across the world.
He spares your gum-trees and he spares your crops,
But on your testimonials he drops,
He chews certificates, your chits he gnaws,
And plays the devil with your paper laws:
Your flagstaffs like banana-leaves are ripped,

Your notice boards like mealie-stems are stripped,
Acres of paper desolated lie,
And groans of angered citizens reply.
Alas, poor Durbanites, which will you choose,
Which of the dread alternatives refuse,
This is the ultimatum that you shirk,
The awful question – Poverty or Work?
Work, that can turn a draper to a Man
And give a human accident a plan.
Work, that could make the sugar-planting race
Stand up and look a black man in the face!
Is it the sign of a 'superior race'
To whine to have 'the nigger kept in place'?
Where is his place save in his strength and sense,
And will he stand aside for impotence,
Does Evolution wait for those who lag
Or curtsy to a cheap colonial Flag?
Is this 'White Labour' – lolling on this stool,
Fed by a black with every needful tool,
The white man sits and uses but his hands,
The black man does the thinking while he stands:
Five years in long apprenticeship were passed

Ere, fit to loaf, the white emerged at last,
And yet in kicks and blows the black must pay
Unless he learns the business in a day.
And will they strive to teach you Afrikaans,
O'er lingual hurdles coax your tongues to prance –
You, through whose jaws the words with dismal hum
Like groans of dying pork from Liebig's come?
And how will you in foreign tongues advance
Who only learned your own by some mischance? –
Listen, how in the true Natalian twang
Your heathen tonsils meet with horrid clang
And make your nose, as by deliberate choice,
A funnel for your all-too-frequent voice!
Plomer, 'twas you who, though a boy in age,
Awoke a sleepy continent to rage,
Who dared alone to thrash a craven race
And hold a mirror to its dirty face.
Praised in all countries where the Muse is known
But hunted like a felon from your own,

Whom shall I sacrifice, what blood infuse
On the neglected altar of your muse? –
Lo, his who took the name of 'Grub' in vain
Though he provides its wrapper with his brain,
Who thundered 'Grub Street!' from his paper throne
Though Grub Street was Olympus to his own[1] –
In vain would he recant the oaths he swore
And eat them back into his throat once more,
As frightened sharks, when sudden dangers loom,
Swallow their young ones back into their womb:
Caught in a puddle of his native ink,
Ere he could vanish down some friendly sink
To lie unnoticed in his destined drain
Where memory might fish for him in vain,–
Behold I haul him to the light displayed
To die the martyr of the scribbling trade!
Prone on the altar of your Muse he lies
And fatly in his own repentance fries,
As when Prime Hogs upon the embers twinge,

REMARK

[1] Field Street, Durban.

And the fat crackles, and the bristles singe,
The fusing limbs in their own blubber flare,
And up the chimney flies the reek of hair –
All that was mortal of him soars sublime
To reek for ever in the nose of Time.
You journalists with righteous wrath who swell
To see a brother turned into a smell –
Be warned by me and his own dreadful fate
Who dies your many sins to expiate –
Sooner with your own pens a lion assail
Or prick a sleeping mamba in the tail,
Than dare the great Apollo to abuse
Or squirt one drop of ink upon the Muse.
Sooner your own vile ink in buckets swill
And swallow both the paper and the quill –
Than dare, though journalists you be, our curse,
Which still can turn you into something *worse*.
We poets will forgive you all we can
With you the dog 'is father to the man,'
'Tis Nature's whim that dogs, when taken short,
Still to the loftiest monument resort,
And oft we shrug and often we are mute

When you our sacred monuments pollute:
Dogs and colonials are in this alike –
One law suffices both for man and tyke –
But dogs are pleased with humble walls at times
And lift their legs unconscious of their crimes,
Yet what colonial would not run a mile
Might he some shining edifice defile?

PART II

II

Now with a slow gyration soars my rhyme
From the ridiculous to the sublime –
Alas, how far beyond his goal has strayed
My Pegasus, who loves in warlike raid,
O'er Durban thundering with his golden hoofs,
To drop great bombs of laughter on your roofs:
We left them at their sacred feast reclined
Diverse in shape though similar in mind.
Some sat apart upon a knoll and talked:
Others like Herons in the ditches stalked:
And all around lay, wallowing at ease,
Full many a porpoise of the beery seas
Who always write exactly what they drink,
And what they swill in laager, vent in ink.
And still new-comers to the Wayzgoose throng
And lady-novelists a thousand strong:
Some gathered flowers, some sprinted for a prize:
Some came with spectacles, and some with eyes:
Some came in char-à-bancs, and some on nags,
Some came in taxis, others came in rags:
Some came with beer and some with good advice,
Some came with morals, others came with lice;

Some came on spec and others came on bikes,
Some came with girls and others came with tykes;
Some came on purpose, others on a brake,
Some came by rail and others by mistake;
Some came by accident – a lucky fluke!
And others came because they feared rebuke.
Some came the food to dig a hungry tusk in,
But Wodson came to quote a ream of Ruskin.
Hill came to make a pun – but he forgot it,
And Sundowner a joke – but none could spot it.
Some arrived there because they knew the way,
Others got there because they went astray;
Some came with food, and some with airs and graces,
And some with expectation on their faces;
Some out of curiosity, and some
To peel bananas with an inky thumb:
Some came with faces – others were like you
Insulted Reader! – and they looked it too.

And some were red and fat – and that from drinking:
Others were spare and lean – but not with thinking.
Some came in hope and others came in fear,
Diverse in shape the multitude appear,
But all, with one indomitable will,
Loyal to Dullness – and to Dullness still!

PLOMER came too, unable to resist,
To bash fat heads together with his fist,
But soon he lay upon the point of death,
Half-chloroformed by journalistic breath;
And statesmen came whose job it is to thump
And shout, and giving honesty the hump,
Too busy even to have time to think,
Drive half the world to war and half to drink:
Both parties there were fully represented –
Parties, in history unprecedented,
Each of whose ranks was totally supplied
By the deserters from the other side
And which are Nats and which are S.A.P. –
'Who shall decide when *Journals* disagree?'

And one was there whom I had seen before,
Full high in anticlimax he could soar
And probe 'behind the button'[1] Nature's lore!
Forgive me, Statesman, that I have purloined
This deathless phrase by thine own genius coined,
Seek on, 'Behind the BUTTON,' in the Void –
Until you come upon the works of Freud!
Statesman-philosopher! I shake thy hand –
All tailors envy thee throughout the land
Whose BUTTON-HOLISM, without reverse,
Undoes the Trousers of the Universe!
Long be thy wisdom honoured, and thy race
Renowned for flinging smuts in 'Beauty's' face!
Long may thy race perform its glorious part
And scatter smuts on every work of art:
Let Plomer's art as smutty filth be banned –
And own us prophets in our native land!

REMARK

[1] 'But *behind the button* there is a great *story* which Science has not yet discovered.' – General Smuts on 'Beauty.'

'Nobody ought to deny that General Smuts is a *great poet*' – *Professor* Drennan.

NEXT Pollio came who dared, intrepid man,
To praise the name of Ruskin with Cezanne –[1]
Strict judge! impartially his praise is got
Alike by painting and by Tommy Rot:
With equal hand distributing the bays,
Both Renoir[1] and 'Vermilion' win his praise.
Yet when he paints the air is full of flies
And hungry vultures gather in the skies –
Rival of Zeuxis! from whose grapes 'tis said
The disillusioned birds in dudgeon fled:
But on his landscapes trusting flies remain
And from his sunsets sip the gory stain:
Still round his every masterpiece they hum
And thick as on a butcher's window drum:
How aptly by some journalistic sage
Was he misnamed the 'Turner' of our age –

REMARK

[1] It is now the *fashion* in South Africa to talk about Renoirs, Cezannes and Van Goghs. But as far as I could discover, no South African has ever seen one – except in photographs.

Reversing Midas' gift, who has been known
To 'Turn' the style of Turner to his own.
Through all the country it is his to range
And with his district all his styles to change:
Shrewd as a pedlar, every town he knows
And changes his opinions where he goes:
In Cape Town, to the moderns he inclines,
In Durban – to Pre-Raphaelitic lines:
And yet howe'er he copies, still appears
The parodist of what he most reveres.
'Turner' and twister of a thousand styles,
Over his toil the Muse of Business smiles,
Pictures and public equally are 'sold,'
And what he turns to dross, *she* turns to *gold*!
While he inspired by mountain cloud and tide
Scatters broadcast o'er canvases as wide,
A 'Light that never was on Land or Sea,'
Nor, thank the Lord, is ever like to be!
Behold his swaddled suns, by nightfall kissed,
Staining the yellow napkins of the mist;
Behold the moon, still reeling from his blows,
Upon a cloudlet wipe its bleeding nose,

And here a rock above the skyline stare,
Seeming to ask what dunce had put him there.
Humble, for all his imitative zeal,
Even from Goodman will he deign to steal,
And, even then, the charge of theft escapes
By being duller still, than what he apes.
He passed upon his way with tender sighs
Of yearning for the Gundelfinger Prize:
No more will he forget his rank and station
To pant behind the younger generation –
Parnassus is too steep for failing years,
The heights are cold, the frost will nip his ears,
But down below – ambitious thoughts arise!
Are Comfort and the Gundelfinger Prize,
And there by strenuous feats of Almatademy
Lo, Honest Trade has founded its Academy!
Another 'painter' came as I presume
Wheeled in a bath-chair by his nom-de-plume,
Who weekly praised him (paint whate'er he might)
In the third person – which was only right.

How much he paid himself such tricks to do
Only himself and his own alias knew,
Yet oft he cursed the younger generation
For 'scratching backs' and 'mutual admiration.'
For it is wrong that artists fight in pairs –
Though any tradesman may exalt his wares
Or join his fellows in an honest guild,
Each by the other's admiration thrilled,
And ready all, in one great yelping pack,
To stab a single artist in the back –
And it is wrong that two should fight abreast
When by a thousand yelping curs oppressed:
Far worse, when making rifles of our pens,
We drive them howling back into their dens.
How *can* young men such decent manners lack
That when they mob us– we should hit them back?–
Pass, 'painter,' pass, take off that tearful gaze,
And Long live Francois in 'Vermilion's' praise!

EVEN the animals had scented fun:
'Jock'[1] from the 'Bushveld' all the way had run.
That faithful quadruped with human soul
Whose tale has caused so many tears to roll.
Full many a raging lion he had mauled,
Never before had fear his heart appalled;
He only came to cock a playful ear,
To sniff the sandwiches and lap the beer;
He only meant his playful tail to switch,
Or hang around for some attractive bitch;
But when he to the gathering drew nigh,
So many curious monsters met his eye,
Down went his tail, his courage and his will –
For all I know, or care, he's running still.

REMARK

[1] 'Jock of the Bushveld,' one of the national heroes of South Africa – which further illustrates my remarks on the natural bond between colonials and dogs. He occurs in a sentimental novel which displays the usual train-window insight into 'native psychology' which is so dear to colonials: and the usual animal-lover's sloppiness which is popular everywhere. Jock was a big-game hunting dog, he had soulful eyes and always tried to bite niggers – a typical colonial.

The 'Early Bird' was there, in spats of mud,
A Tegwan[1] from the clear Umgeni Flood;
The endless joke, for ever in his bill,
He tried to whisper in the ear of Hill,
But in his mouth there was a worm as well
(Though which were which it would be hard to tell),
And straight into the ear of Hill it fell –
An awful joke – it tickled him like Hell!
Pleased with his damp abode, the worm remains,
And Hill gets half the credit of its brains;
The 'Early Bird' devoured his own poor joke,
And none the wiser, did not even choke.

HERE was a man – I thought it was a mess,
A bottle-nosed Narcissus of the Press

REMARK

[1] Tegwan – an ungainly wading bird that spends half its time building houses and the other half messing about in the slime – like the Early Bird who inhabits the same district – Durban North.

Whom God had doomed through all his years to
blink
At his own image in a pool of ink,
In which his own reflection met his eye
And, like a bullfrog, ogled him to die.
Each day revived his ineffectual breath –
Quotidian suicide, diurnal death,
Inured to burial, he still defied,
And daily of his own reflections died.
Sublime he ruled, in his own thoughts benighted,
Woe to the wayward youth who may have slighted
Those high ideals which he supplied the link
to –
There was no grovelling depth he would not
sink to,
Nor any villainy he would have shunned
To keep his soul pure or his paunch rotund!
What nectar of ethereal elements
Inspires this prophet of next week's events –
The fumes of some bituminous cigar,
Or something . . . round the corner . . . from
the Bar?

Born in old age: ere youth had yet begun,
Into his second childhood he had run:
A dotard, ere from swaddling he was freed,
Before he ran to play he ran to seed:
But, as those lizards which are kept in jars
Defy corruption, he, in smelly bars,
Preserved intact, no wight so hale as he,
A methylated Immortality –
Whisky he gulped with slobberings uncouth,
But lived in total abstinence of truth.

BUT last came Jubb with 'Biltong' in his hand –
Official organ of Banana Land:
Large was his 'brow,'[1] the wonder of its kind,
And as he walked it jutted out behind.

REMARK

[1] I remember an occasion in Durban when a man delivered a lecture on 'Why I am a highbrow.' His brow was invisible and his only prominent feature was an enormous posterior which suggested the following lines:

There once came a highbrow
from Britain,
Whose praises can never be
written,
So steep rose his high brow,
From his heel to his eyebrow
With a bump in the middle to
sit on.

His head with aspidistras had been crowned,
And all the Durban Muses danced around –
Gorgons and highbrows and Chimæras dire
With tongues on wag and spectacles on fire.
Polybious Jubb, in thy kind self I see
The anagram of what a man should be.
So versatile thy Webb-like mind is spun
Thou jack-of-all-arts, but thou Lord of None!
See how thy various talents fully blown
Perform all other functions save their own:
A Socialist thou art in thought and act,
And yet thy business flourishes intact:
A Boss in trade, thou art securely placed,
And only art a Bolshevik in taste:
To kill a sheep, too tender is thy heart,
Yet wilt thou massacre a work of art.
Thou hast the praise of vegetables sung,
Yet play the Butcher to your mother tongue:
A linguist in your sleep, and in your prose
A chilled somnambulist with purple toes;
Music thou lovest, that forbidden fruit!
Yet thou art only musical when mute,

Or when thy nose, in slumber, plays the flute.
No vaccination on thy hide appears,[1]
But on thy mind – immune to all ideas.
O great Eclectic – do I do thee wrong?
English, art, music, vegetables, and song,
All to the same consistency you mash.
Your life – a Kedgeree! Your mind – a hash!
Behold this page where by thy 'drastic' strength
Catullus was 'reorganized'[2] at length –

REMARKS

[1] Not content with being enemies to the arts, about fifty Jubbs at every small-pox outbreak, conscientiously object to science and do everything they can to spread the disease by proselytizing among uneducated people for anti-vaccination.

[2] 'Voorslag will be drastically reorganized. Neither Mr. Campbell nor Mr. Plomer will be associated with it from now on' – (Voorslag). Voorslag nevertheless retained some of our MSS. to which they claimed a legal right and we allowed them to be published after exacting the *promise that they would not be tampered with.* After having both solicited and accepted our MSS., the founders, without asking our permission, and before publication, read them aloud at their public literary debauches. Then, after that, they made considerable alterations to the proofs, spoiling everything we wrote either by their bungling 'improvements' or by neglecting to correct the proofs.

Misprints in galaxies the sight entranced,
And Afrikaans was yet out-Afrikaansed.
Left on thy hands, demented by his fears,
Here Baudelaire in Gibberish appears,
And Rimbaud's ghost indignantly pursues
The brutal printer that defiled his muse.
Alone he seemed to stand – but at Jubb's side
(In ink invisible her robes were dyed)
Hovered deodorized, in gaseous hues,
Fair Pyorrhœa, the Colonial Muse –
So in old times the punctual gods would perch
Who never left their heroes in the lurch.

After doing so they put our names to these adulterated contributions and to their own mutilations. When they eventually appeared, naturally the cat-calls of the critics rose to a higher pitch than ever, but our exposures of this fraud were neglected by the papers. So barbarous are the laws of the country that we could claim neither apology nor redress, nor even inflict adequate corporal punishment without being heavily penalized by law. South African law has necessarily to protect philistines and charlatans – otherwise the 'South Africans' would all be in gaol.

'Twas She who first the flames of Genius lit
In Herman's[1] 'Guide Book to the Infinite,'
Wherein the sage records and much admires
How his great-grandmother detected fires,
And of her telepathic powers doth tell,
Which he confuses with her sense of smell.
For when in suffocating fumes she woke
And found her room half-hidden in the smoke,
Some 'supernormal power,' he says, was nigh her
And warned her that the building was on fire!
'Tis She who when our Scots professors woo
Sadly reminds them of their 'mither's broo,'
'Tis She who makes our nature poets melt
With yearning for the bleak and barren veld,
Whither, though trains from every junction puff,
They never venture – sensibly enough!
Inspired by Her the lofty Drennan sprung
To write his poems – yet remain unhung:
'Twas due to Her – a couple rather odd,
That Drennan in the garden walked with God.

REMARK

[1] Another S. African 'philosopher.'

'Twas She who breathed the Theory Holistic,
And turned a general into a mystic:
'Twas She, alas, inspired the great 'Z.Z.',
Against my fist to break his addled head,
'Tis She this Humpty Dumpty now renews,
Not to hit back – but still to write reviews
And letters to the Press, in righteous vein,
Against the 'smutty Shakespeare' to complain.
To Her we also owe those doubtful boons,
The heavy Boonzaier's lumbering cartoons,
At whose laborious jokes we only laugh
As at the antics of some huge giraffe:
Still in the cause of politics he serves,
To Party prostitutes his blunted nerves,
For every fault he shows in other men
Commits ten crimes with his unwieldy pen,
Yet when he drops his pencil, contrite man!
He dares with reverence to name Cezanne –
So dying sinners, by their fears engrossed,
Turn from their crimes to name the Holy Ghost.
But halt, my muse, why should we thus reveal
What damp oblivion would else conceal?

Fair Pyorrhœa, whom we've left so long,
Stood as I said, unseen, amid the throng.
In ink invisible She dyed her charms
And dimmed the yellow freckles on her arms:
Colonial grace on all her motions hung
And wit colonial tittered on her tongue –
She seemed, as there She tossed her wanton curls,
The prototype of all colonial girls,
For like a V upturned, stork-like and thin,
Her long straight legs forked downward from her chin;
Had there been room for one to intervene,
Her body like a goitre would have been –
But what of that? Colonial poets tell
That beauty only in the Soul can dwell
(Poor devils! they are right – at least as far
As goes their knowledge of what 'women' are):
A head, two shins, a knot of withered hair,
Suffice to make colonial 'women' fair.
The body is indecent: She had none
Nor would have deigned to own it had she one.

But ah! her Soul's dimensions to report –
Elephantiasis comes far too short!
Like some huge Zeppelin, its inflated cyst
Flew far above and hovered in the mist.
Her two long teeth protruded like a vole's –
In women still the sign of ardent souls,
And at her shoulders played, like eagle's wings,
Two wild banana leaves attached by strings.
There as she bent above her chosen Knight
A lovely fragrance ravished all his sprite,
From lentils cooking, seemed the scent to steal,
Or carrots at a vegetarian meal:
Proudly he felt that presence o'er him bow
And Laager still and Laager grew his 'brow,'
While all his Soul went yearning to the Muse,
Like a long drink sucked upward from his shoes.

ALL these and more came flocking to the place,
But most were of the journalistic race;
And what if total strangers butted in?
One touch of boredom makes the whole world kin.

And when their rites to Great God Grub were
paid,
To Dullness next the mighty concourse made
Libations of ambrosial lemonade:
And there, in honour of the Drowsy God,
Polybius Jubb proclaimed the Eisteddfod.
First they disputed who the first should sing,
Deciding, next, by lots to try the thing,
But ere the winner could be drawn or not,
Alas, poor lots! Polybius drew the Lot.
Vain was expostulation, forth he trod
And thus with sacred rage invoked the God,–
While o'er his head, a young banana-frond,
The Muse, unseen, upraised her magic wand –
'Anointed Dullness, faithful still to you,
And to Colonial Culture staunchly true,
With patriot zeal I string my native lyre
Where strings of biltong hum in place of wire –
My native lyre, unique in shape and size,
Whose frame the wishbone of a mule supplies,
And from whose cords the sounding notes are shed
Like putty dropping on a slab of lead.

Inspire my soul to prophecy sublime,
To frenzied platitude and halting rhyme,
Teach me with moon my dusty brains to shine
And contradict myself in every line . . .'
No more these whirling words amazed our ears,
For in a trice, the God invoked appears –
Of 'God's Stepchildren'[1] you have heard, I'll wad,
But of Wod's godson, Stepfather of God,
You never heard: nor in good faith had I,
Yet there he was – and that you can't deny:
Down with a thud he settles on his rump,
And rocks and caves reverberate the thump:
Ere God taught fishes in the sea to swim
Dullness was there, the World belonged to him:
In utter Night he did the skies immerse
And was the Northcliffe of the Universe,
And still, in spite of God, he holds his own
Ruling the Nations from his paper throne:
Of Tin Gods you may oft have heard or read
But this one was entirely made of lead,

REMARK

[1] A South African novel.

From journalists he never wandered far,
And when he travelled in his cloudy car,
He hitched his Dinner Waggon to 'The Star.'

THE sacred aspidistra wreathed his brows –
Low at his feet the whole assembly bows:
The Judge then bids the rival bards proceed
Each from his works some chosen page to read,
But Jubb was first to take his stately stand
A huge Directory was in his hand,
And fast and thick as sounding hail can fly
Names and Addresses thundered through the sky!
Contagious yawns spread all around the place
And every dullard swallowed half his face:
Vain was it with such boredom to contend
For Jubb could have sustained it to the end,
The lady novelists their entrance scratched
Wodson and Hill their dying hopes despatched,
Herman in vain his tears of envy shed;
Even our great philosopher flushed red
And Holism was knocked upon the head!

Sublime the victor stood – and weighed a ton,
Polybius Jubb the Eisteddfod had won!

BUT here 'Z.Z.' his anger could not quench –
'Prove first it was translated from the French,
From Afrikaans, from Russian, from the Zoo,
From anything – mere English will not do!'
But Jubb would not be thwarted by a fool who
Knew neither French nor Russian from the Zulu:
He showed his skill and jabbered in Hindoo –
As all Theosophists have learned to do:
'Z.Z.' was pleased, but wondered all the same
Whether from Russian or from French it came;
And so with all the anti-English crew,
Who muttered their approval and withdrew.

EVEN the God, lest he should be out-bored,
Astutely then declared that Jubb had scored,
And beckoning the victor, bade him rise
To loud ovations and receive the prize:

But though through pants and vest the God explored
And from his pockets all the wealth outpoured,
He delved at first in vain and could not find
The Sacred Carrot with the golden rind,
Whose magic runt, no matter who might chew,
The more one nibbled it, the larger grew.
First he produced – some people thought it rude –
The missing part of 'Portraits in the Nude'[1]
Then having seen his error, paled with fear
And coughed – Ahem, we'll leave the matter here!
He thrust it back and fumbled once again
Drew forth a watch and then a rusty chain,
The more he delved, the less his pockets bulged –
But many an awful secret was divulged –
The work of poets altered in the proofs
And trampled by a thousand donkeys' hoofs,

REMARK

[1] A story in William Plomer's *I Speak of Africa*. It appeared first in a well-known Natal magazine and was mutilated without his permission before being printed.

Dismembered manuscripts, reduced to splinters,
Bejubbified before they reached the printers;
Broken agreements, fragments of a play,
A bunch of lentils and a wisp of hay:
Then he produced an epoch-making article
Filched from the French in every single particle,
And signed by – hush, it must not be confessed –
For Pollio's sake I will conceal the rest.
All these and more lay littered at his feet
Ere from his drawers he drew the promised treat,
But just as Jubb was sailing smooth and bland
To seize the sacred carrot in his hand,
He gave a sudden lurch, his face went blue
His 'brow' distended as to burst in two,
He gulped his face with one tremendous swallow,
Down it descended into caverns hollow;
But Jubb had not the enterprise to follow,
And with the wheezings of a punctured tyre,
Gave one last kick, and started to expire:
Let all kind friends this grievous loss deplore
He died as he had lived – a thorough Bore!

THE reason of this shock was soon confessed,
In doleful strains my muse must sing the rest –
A *poet*, on his way to bathe, had stumbled
Nude, on the gathering: the heavens rumbled:
Chaste ladies screamed as at a hippogriff
And even on roast fowls, though cold and stiff
The parsons' noses gave a little sniff:
Forth from the bush that awful vision peered
And like a flambeau flared his ginger beard,
A Tarzan on the fringes of the wood,
Hairy and huge, gorilla-like he stood:
He showed his shaggy face and hairy chest
But wild banana-leaves concealed the rest.
Some gasped, some stared, but it is fair to say
The lady-writers turned the other way.
He gave a growl, the journalists – a start,
Then wistfully they turned them to depart.
Whatever type of bores they may have been,
At least they proved they were not Gadarene,
Those had the sense to drown themselves: but these
Stole meekly off between the darkening trees.

THE Setting Sunrise darkened o'er the glade
Where late a thousand journalists had strayed,
For now they rattled home beneath the stars
And gaily sped the char-à-bancs and cars.
The field was left, a desolated space,
And slaughtered sausages bestrewed the place:
So thickly crumpled paper strewed the lea,
It seemed that all their writings there must be
That had not swept in sewers to the sea:
But all was still – here lay deserted crumbs
And drumsticks sucked by journalistic gums,
And one could learn, from all that there one saw,
How better than the pen they wield the jaw:
Like Flodden field or Bannockburn it seemed,
And over all the Wild Banana streamed.
Now with faint odour mounting to the skies
The ghosts of mangled sausages arise,
And spectral buns await the final end
With raptured Hallelujahs to ascend,
The twilight fell on Umkoomaas lagoon –
And silver in the silence rose the Moon.

DATE DUE

GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PR6005
.A417
.W3
1971

284137

PR6005
.A417
.W3
1971

284137

Campbell
The wayzgoose

DATE	ISSUED TO

O6-BEN-575